



ENDOCRINE DISRUPTING CHEMICALS (EDCs) MID-CYCLE REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE

**Conference Call Summary
Tuesday, November 6, 2007
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time**

Welcome

Dr. Deborah Swackhamer, University of Minnesota, Subcommittee Chair

Dr. Deborah Swackhamer, Chair of the Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs) Mid-Cycle Review Subcommittee of the Board of Scientific Counselors (BOSC), welcomed the Subcommittee members to the conference call and thanked them for participating in this review. The purpose of this call is for the Subcommittee members to discuss and further refine the draft report that was prepared after the face-to-face meeting on September 18, 2007, in Arlington, Virginia.

Administrative Procedures

Ms. Heather Drumm, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)/Office of Research and Development (ORD), Designated Federal Officer (DFO)

Ms. Heather Drumm, Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Subcommittee, thanked the Subcommittee members for their participation in this mid-cycle review. She then reviewed the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) procedures that are required for all BOSC Subcommittee meetings. As the DFO for the Subcommittee, Ms. Drumm serves as the liaison between the Subcommittee and EPA's Office of Research and Development (ORD). It is her responsibility as the DFO to ensure that the Subcommittee's conference calls and meetings comply with all FACA rules.

The BOSC is a Federal Advisory Committee that provides independent, scientific peer review and advice to EPA's ORD, and as such, is subject to the rules and requirements of FACA. The EDCs Mid-Cycle Review Subcommittee was established by the BOSC to review the progress made by the EDCs Program since the program review that was conducted by the BOSC in December 2004. All meetings and conference calls involving substantive issues—whether in person, by phone, or by e-mail—that include one-half or more of the Subcommittee members must be open to the public, and a notice must be placed in the *Federal Register* at least 15 days prior to the call or meeting. The Subcommittee Chair and DFO must be present at all conference calls and meetings. All advisory committee documents are made available to the public. Ms. Drumm reported that no requests for public comment were submitted prior to the call, but the agenda allows time for public comment at 2:00 p.m. She will call for public comments at that time, and each comment should be limited to 3 minutes.

This is the third conference call of the EDCs Mid-Cycle Review Subcommittee. The first conference call was held August 21, 2007, and a second conference call scheduled for September 14, 2007, was cancelled. A face-to-face meeting was held September 18, 2007, in Arlington, Virginia, and a subsequent

conference call was held October 17, 2007. This call is a followup to that call to allow Subcommittee members to further refine the draft report. The Subcommittee's final report will be sent to the BOSC Executive Committee before its next public meeting in January 2008.

Subcommittee Discussion, Draft Report

Dr. Deborah Swackhamer, University of Minnesota, Subcommittee Chair

Dr. Swackhamer stated that she had received edits from Dr. Stephen Safe and would incorporate them into the report. She asked if the Subcommittee members had any general comments about the report. Dr. Glen Van Der Kraak suggested removing some of the many references to budgetary constraints in the report. Dr. Swackhamer asked Dr. Van Der Kraak if he had any suggestions on how to address this issue. He proposed discussing the report section by section and deleting any unnecessary references to the budget. Dr. Swackhamer agreed with this suggestion and asked if there were any comments on the summary.

Dr. Glen Boyd said that he had some minor editorial comments that he would send to Dr. Swackhamer. Referring to the second to last paragraph in the summary section, Dr. Boyd suggested adding the words "in the area of risk management" to the last sentence to clarify that the sentence was referring to EPA taking on more of a leadership role in the area of risk management. The revised sentence would read, "The Subcommittee recognized that EPA has achieved significant leadership in EDCs research and encourages the Agency to take on an even more visible leadership role in the area of risk management." Dr. Van Der Kraak suggested deleting or moving the words "with limited resources." Dr. Swackhamer said that she preferred that those words remain in the summary. Dr. Van Der Kraak agreed to keep the current text but noted that there was another place in the summary where budget was mentioned already. A sentence in the third paragraph of the summary section reads, "In cases where they did not, it was almost exclusively because of budget constraints." Dr. Boyd pointed out that the new Multi-Year Plan (MYP) was referred to as "excellent" in some places and as "very good" in others. He suggested using "excellent" throughout the document. Dr. Swackhamer agreed and asked if there were any other comments on the summary. No comments were offered.

The introduction section was largely unchanged from the last time the Subcommittee members reviewed it. Dr. Swackhamer asked if there were any comments on this section. No comments were offered.

Dr. Swackhamer asked if there were any comments on the response to Charge Question #1. Dr. Van Der Kraak proposed deleting the last sentence in the first paragraph, "In cases where they did not, it was almost exclusively because of resource constraints." The sentence is redundant; the next paragraph begins with a sentence about the Program refocusing its priorities as a result of budget cuts. Dr. Swackhamer agreed and asked if there were any other comments. There were no comments. Dr. Van Der Kraak stated that he liked the use of bold text in this section. Dr. Swackhamer explained that she had bolded the text to highlight the key points; thus, it is especially important that the Subcommittee members reach consensus on the bolded text. Dr. Boyd added that he also liked the use of the bold text. In the sentence that reads, "This has continued to be a challenge given the significant budgetary pressures that the Program is facing." Dr. Boyd suggested replacing "this" with "wildlife toxicology." This change will allow the bolded sentence to stand alone. Dr. Swackhamer agreed to make this edit. Dr. Van Der Kraak noted that on page 7, in the first full paragraph, the acronym EDRP was incorrectly listed as "ERDP." Dr. Swackhamer agreed to make this correction and added that the reference to the BOSC in the first sentence of that paragraph should read, "the previous BOSC Subcommittee." Referring to the sentence on CAFOs in the same paragraph, "One area where the EDRP has taken the lead in this regard has been with respect to understanding the risks posed by concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs), which were identified as a major concern by the BOSC Subcommittee during the last program review." Dr. Boyd

stated that he thought that sentence would fit better in the paragraph about partnering at the end of page 7. Dr. Safe suggested adding a short paragraph on the topic, highlighting the fact that CAFOs was an area of concern that the Program had begun to address in recent years. Dr. Swackhamer agreed with this suggestion. She asked the Subcommittee members if there were any other comments on the discussion of Long-Term Goal (LTG) 1. No comments were offered. Dr. Swackhamer asked for comments on LTG 2. Referring to the sentence that reads, "As mentioned under LTG 1, this is an area of strength within EPA..." Dr. Boyd suggested clarifying the reference of "this." Dr. Swackhamer agreed and said that she would make the edit. Dr. Boyd suggested removing the footnotes from the same page. He explained that he had included the footnotes as a reference in the working draft; they were not intended for inclusion in the final report. The other Subcommittee members agreed to this deletion. Dr. Swackhamer asked if there were any other comments on LTG 2 or LTG 3. No comments were offered.

Dr. Swackhamer asked if there were any comments on the response to Charge Question #2. She explained that she bolded text that clearly articulates the point of a paragraph. There were no additional comments on Charge Question #2.

Dr. Swackhamer asked if there were any comments on the response to Charge Question #3. Dr. Safe said that he thought the response was a bit over the top. Metrics are important, but many of the metrics suggested in this section are impossible to achieve in the near future. Dr. Van Der Kraak agreed. Dr. Swackhamer asked if there were any specific suggestions for the response. Drs. Safe and Van Der Kraak both agreed that the issue was a much larger one than the Subcommittee could address and agreed that it was not necessary to change the response. Dr. Safe noted that the use of metrics too soon after the initiation of a program is of dubious value. Dr. Swackhamer added that the section included a sentence to that effect, "Given that the success of the EDRP has been notably hampered, we suggest that metrics be considered in the context of budget, FTEs, and the amount of time a particular activity has been underway." She suggested strengthening that sentence. Dr. Safe suggested adding a sentence about using caution when utilizing metrics to measure scientific success. Dr. Swackhamer agreed and suggested moving that paragraph to the beginning of the response. Dr. Safe offered to draft the new sentence. Dr. Swackhamer asked the other Subcommittee members if they agreed with this change; the Subcommittee members agreed with the revision. She asked if there were any other comments on Charge Question #3, and there were none.

Dr. Swackhamer asked if there were any comments on the response to Charge Question #4. Dr. Boyd suggested deleting the sentence on the last line of page 10 that reads, "Thus, we recommend that they stay the course." Dr. Swackhamer and the other Subcommittee members agreed that the sentence was repetitive. Dr. Swackhamer stated that she would like to change the bulleted text by bolding only the key words. Dr. Boyd agreed and suggested deleting the lists of organizations from the bullets. Everyone agreed with this change. There was discussion on possibly changing the bulleted phrases to full sentences or changing the verb tense. The Subcommittee decided to change only the verb tense. For example, the bullet currently reading, "compiling and synthesizing" would be changed to "compile and synthesize." Dr. Boyd suggested deleting the paragraph that begins, "With reduced available budget..." as the meaning of the paragraph was unclear. All the other Subcommittee members agreed to this change. Dr. Swackhamer asked if there were any more comments on Charge Question #4. No comments were offered.

Dr. Swackhamer asked if there were any comments on Charge Question #5. There were no comments.

Next Steps

Dr. Swackhamer summarized the edits to be made to the draft report:

- ✧ Drs. Boyd and Van Der Kraak will send their editorial comments to Dr. Swackhamer.
- ✧ Dr. Swackhamer will incorporate the edits she receives.
- ✧ Dr. Van Der Kraak will determine where the CAFOs sentence would best fit.
- ✧ Dr. Safe will draft a sentence or two about being cautious with metrics.

Dr. Swackhamer asked the Subcommittee members to send their edits to her as soon as possible. The edits will be incorporated, and the report will be sent to the Subcommittee members for final approval. After the report has been approved, it will be sent to the BOSC Executive Committee for review at the January meeting. Dr. Swackhamer asked Ms. Drumm if the Subcommittee needed to draft a transmittal letter to accompany the report. Ms. Drumm responded that a letter was not necessary. Ms. Drumm explained that two BOSC Executive Committee members would be assigned to review the report and lead the discussion at the January 2008 BOSC Executive Committee meeting.

Closing Remarks

Dr. Swackhamer asked the Subcommittee members if they had any final comments or questions. None were offered. She asked Dr. Elaine Francis if she had any comments. Dr. Francis thanked the Subcommittee members for their time and effort in reviewing the Program's progress.

Dr. Swackhamer thanked the Subcommittee members for their efforts and adjourned the call at 1:56 p.m.

Public Comments

Ms. Heather Drumm, EPA/ORD, DFO

Ms. Drumm remained on the call and at 2:00 p.m., she called for public comments. There were no public comments offered.

Action Items

- ✧ Drs. Boyd and Van Der Kraak will send their editorial comments to Dr. Swackhamer.
- ✧ Dr. Van Der Kraak will determine where the CAFOs sentence would best fit.
- ✧ Dr. Safe will draft a sentence or two about being cautious with metrics.
- ✧ Dr. Swackhamer will compile the document and send it to the other Subcommittee members for final approval.

PARTICIPANTS LIST

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EDCs MID-CYCLE SUBCOMMITTEE

AGENDA

November 6, 2007

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Participation by Teleconference Only

866-299-3188

code: 2025648239#

1:00-1:05 p.m.	Welcome	Dr. Deborah Swackhamer Subcommittee Chair
1:05-1:10 p.m.	Administrative Procedures	Heather Drumm Subcommittee DFO
1:10-2:00 p.m.	Subcommittee Discussion - Draft Report	Dr. Deborah Swackhamer Subcommittee Chair
2:00-2:05 p.m.	Public Comment	
2:05-3:00 p.m.	Subcommittee Discussion, continued - Draft Report - Next Steps	Dr. Deborah Swackhamer Subcommittee Chair
3:00 p.m.	Adjourn	